



March 28, 2023

Jessica Vega-Pederson
County Chair - Multnomah County
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Portland, OR 97214

Chair Vega-Pederson:

Neighbors4SafeSmartShelters, a coalition opposed to the Safe Rest Village (SRV) on the 1100 block of NW Naito, Portland Oregon, is writing this letter to accompany the attached formal petition and signatures from homeowners, renters, small business workers and owners, residents and others in NW Portland.

We and the attached petitioners ,over 850 strong, call for an immediate halt to the City and County plan for the SRV on NW Naito.

With “person” crimes in the area - including assaults - increasing 28% to 286 year over year ending June 30th, an already failed and badly managed Harbor of Hope Navigation Shelter (HOH) on NW Naito, and yet another hastily and poorly planned homeless program right next to HOH, the SRV is poised to bring more community damage with no standards, metrics, and accountabilities for those most in need.

And, NW Portland is already home to over 45% of subsidized housing in all of Portland — homeowners, residents and businesses are more than doing their fair share in demonstrating care and concern for homeless persons — via their time and treasure in countless ways.

N4safe opposes this project because:

- The entire process, beginning with a public announcement with ***no prior input, consultation, and collaboration with neighbors and our community has been wholly unfair, unjust and not in keeping with the standards of a democratic society.*** From the very beginning, questions (even the most basic ones), requests for specific information such as site standards, SRV metrics and accountabilities along with meeting requests have been ignored, unanswered or answered inadequately through deflection or deferment.
- The SRV was declared a “done deal” ***under the cover of an ‘emergency declaration’ which gave no respect or concern for increasing crime statistics, existing public safety and security issues, and the ongoing severe challenges with the existing HOH on NW Naito.*** On a regular basis, evidence abounds of destruction: ambulances outside HOH, deaths, injuries, fires, car and apartment/condo break-ins, open drug dealing, prostitution, toxic waste, and significant spillover encampments with children present.
- The SRV would add yet another poorly managed homeless program as part of the Homeless Industrial Complex with no barriers to entry, no background checks, no required attendance for alcohol and drug addiction, **and no adequate safety protocols for the homeless persons or the neighborhood.**
- The combined and multiplier effect of the existing HOH and the proposed no/low barrier SRV have not been addressed. There has been no projected analysis around safety, crime and sanitation problems for the community which are already at a tipping point.
- The SRV model places the severely ill, alcohol and drug addicted - some of the most difficult clients to treat, among high-density residential housing, home to thousands of families and children.
- **A competent management entity with demonstrated experience and success has not been identified.**

- No comprehensive, successful strategic plan for effective programming of the SRV model has been developed or shared.

There has been no demonstration of how the SRV or the model will protect public health and safety, promising nothing more than a Good Neighbor Agreement (GNA), like those that have consistently failed to address rampant crime, safety, and sanitation issues around many other homeless projects in NW Portland, including HOH.

There is no accountability and enforceability of the GNA and no specifics under which the City and County would be accountable under the GNA for the SRV model. As neighbors to HOH, we know the results of non-compliance and constant finger pointing with regard to GNA enforcement - any GNA is not workable nor enforceable.

Further, SRV related “consultation” with groups and “stake holders” invariably end with the city and the county leaders not listening, not making any changes or mitigating the SRV program to meet the demands of the neighbors. Stakeholders pull out - the city does nothing - and the SRV is built anyway. **Consultation is defined as meaningful and mutual dialogue and results from the dialogue** - not the city and county talking and everyone else have to comply - “Emergency Declaration” or not.

We support smart, workable and most of all safe and secure homeless solutions like Bybee Lakes and permanent housing.

Therefore, Neighbors4SafeSmartShelters and petitioners demand the City and County to halt the SRV on NW Naito so a workable solution at another location can be identified.

This would include the necessary and specific plans based on successful models that don't further place homeless persons in dire straights and communities of families and businesses in harm's way.

Sincerely,

S/ The Volunteers at Neighbors4SafeSmartShelters

CC: PDNA